

NEWARK, N.J.
NEWS

E - 278,235
S - 423,157
JAN 31 1969

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Allen W. Dulles

A former high official of the Central Intelligence Agency wrote last year that the CIA's "successes have been many" but its "failures have been public." Much the same might be said of Allen W. Dulles, who was director of the CIA in the Eisenhower years and most of the first Kennedy year.

Mr. Dulles' death brings immediately to mind the two great embarrassments which the CIA helped bring upon the United States during his tenure. The downing of a U2 spy plane by the Soviet Union on May 1, 1960 led to Premier Khrushchev's wrecking of the Big Four summit conference at Paris two weeks later. And the botching of the Bay of Pigs invasion in Cuba on April 17, 1961 shook the Kennedy administration before it was three months old.

But both of these unfortunate incidents, occurring within one year, should not obscure Mr. Dulles' long service to his country. This contribution began with his entry into the diplomatic service in 1916, before his older brother, John Foster Dulles, undertook his first international mission. Allen Dulles performed effectively for the Office of Strategic Services in World War II. President Kennedy was sufficiently impressed with his record to ask him to continue under his administration.

Mr. Dulles may have stretched the CIA beyond its proper scope, but his overall career was one of dependable contribution to his country.